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Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Harbor Comments
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

Occasionally, I will do a little boating on the Willamette River. Although I acknowledge that something needs to be done to eliminate the pollution that caused the Portland Harbor to be termed a "Superfund site" by the EPA, I don't agree with how it is proposing to fix this problem.

Our rivers are very important to Portland, both for transportation and for scenic beauty. The EPA's proposal for dredging the Willamette River for decades will not be a pretty thing to see and, ultimately, tourism is going to be hurt. The businesses closest to the project will have to deal with unsightly, noisy equipment transporting contaminated waste throughout the area. This will have a negative effect on tourism because people don't want to go where they are going to be less comfortable. Continual dredging will have a serious effect on businesses located near the construction site.

The EPA estimates that the cost of dredging the river will cost upwards of a billion dollars, and that it will be paid for through higher taxes and utility rates. I have owned a retail outlet for 32 years that sells bowling equipment, and we are located about four miles from the river. An increase in taxes would force me to raise prices to compensate for the increase. This would not be good for the local economy.

In addition, there are a lot of other areas in Portland where that \$1 billion could be spent. For example, we need to clean up the homeless situation for starters. That is an incredibly huge issue for us. We could also spend that money on education. Plus, the EPA could look into targeted dredging rather than the full-scale dredging they are considering now. You would always want to start with the worst first, and then assess the project's progress before moving forward.

I believe every logical solution to cleaning the polluted parts of the Willamette River needs to be examined, and the public allowed to make a decision, before the EPA follows through with its current plans on dredging.

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